- The Government of India as also REC, the nodal agency for RGGVY, are conducting frequent review meetings with all the stakeholders such as, the concerned State Governments; state power utilities and implementing agencies for expeditious implementation of the scheme on the agreed schedules.

- For speedier and effective implementation of projects, their execution has been taken up on turnkey basis.

Melting of glaciers

2139. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI

Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the first-hand accounts of vanishing glaciers, melting ice routes, crumbling rock formations and flood prone lakes where glaciers once rose, which were recently given by a group of scientifically trained alpine and ice climbers in USA;

(b) if so, whether any such changes have been noticed in the high altitude mountains and lakes in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, whether a selective study of our vulnerable mountains and lakes is proposed to be undertaken, so that timely remedial measures could be evolved?

THE MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes Sir. This is reported as a science and technology column with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) News posted by Associated Press on 7th April, 2007.

(b) and (c) Glaciers, in general, including the Himalayan glaciers, are receding. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has been conducting studies on the recession of the Gangotri glacier since 1935. In the eastern Himalayas, which sit in the Ganga basin, have reported glacier melts.

The rate of shrinking of 30.2 km-long Gangotri Glacier in the last three decades has been found to be more than the rate during the earlier decades. Average recession for this period is about 25 meter/year (83 feet/year). Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology (WIHG) is studying the melting of Himalayan Glaciers in the Garhwal Himalaya, namely, Dokriani and Chorabari glaciers. The Dokriani and Chorabari glaciers have been receding at an average rate of 17.5 m/year between 1991 and 2005, and 10 m/year between 2003 and 2006 respectively.

(d) Department of Science and Technology (DST) is planning to establish a specialized research center at the national level for initiating holistic studies on Himalayan Glaciology including the effective monitoring all important glaciers and to work out options to effectively deal with the emerging situation with increased snow melts in the future.